

**MINUTES OF DUCKLINGTON PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
HELD ON WEDNESDAY 8 SEPTEMBER 2010
IN THE LILAC ROOM, VILLAGE HALL, DUCKLINGTON AT 7.30 PM**

113.10 Members Present: Edmund Strainge (Chairman)
Adrian Armitage
Richard Border
Brian Hicks
Peter Godwin
Catherine Maddison

In Attendance: Helen Sandhu - Clerk

114.10 Members' Apologies: Peter Almgill
Graham Lenton
Glyn Rees

115.10 Minutes of meetings held on 7 July and 4 August 2010

The minutes of the above meetings were approved and signed by Edmund Strainge as a true record of the meeting.

116.10 County/District Council Matters

Neither the County nor the District Councillor was present.

117.10 Parish Councillors – Disclosure of interests on agenda items

None

118.10 Matters Arising from Previous Meetings

a) *Parish infrastructure issues*

- *Request for new signage/waiting restrictions around entrance to Fritillary Mews*
A further letter was sent to Oxfordshire Highways following the 4 August meeting
Their response indicates that the traffic orders awaited for near Fritillary Mews should be done “shortly” and that the timescale for this is in the control of the District Council, not the County Council.
- HGV signage on Ducklington roundabout
Blue “not suitable for HGVs” signs now installed on 30mph limit signs at entrance to Aston Road from A415. Clerk has queried choice of placement of these signs.
Oxfordshire Highways has stated that the new signs for the roundabout were due to be ordered in the first week of August.
- Virtual footpath by Old Rectory
Tony Currell, an Oxfordshire Highways officer, has suggested that a new site meeting to discuss this and the issue of on-street parking on Standlake Road may be useful. Clerk to arrange.
- Gulley/drainage pipe repair at the A415 junction into Aston
Nothing to report

118.10 Matters Arising from Previous Meetings (continued)

b) New bus shelters on A415 – Agreement with Primesite Media

The Clerk told the Parish Council that a cheque for £4,000 has been received from Primesite Media, in accordance with the agreement. The bus shelters are scheduled to be installed in the week commencing 13 September.

c) Surface water drainage issue – sportsfield extension

The order for the clearance work has been placed with Dick Rudd. Clerk to check when he plans to do the work.

d) Cul de sac signs on Moors Close

Now installed by West Oxfordshire District Council.

e) Village Pond

A meeting of the Pond Working Group took place on 1 September; the notes of the meeting prepared by Peter Almgill were read out to the Parish Council.

It was decided that if a location to dispose of the sludge from the bottom of the pond can be identified Smiths will be asked if they can help with its removal in the coming weeks.

Edmund Strainge agreed to deal with this issue.

At the Working Group meeting Martin Layer had said that it would be helpful to identify some private wells in the village which could be included in the fortnightly water table recordings in order to get a more full picture of the movement of the water table. Parish Councillors agreed to approach some people who may have wells direct and it was also agreed that a request for people with wells to come forward would be included in the next newsletter.

It was decided that it is important to wait until there is more information about the movement of the local water levels before decisions about plans to dig out/reshape the pond area and install the filter beds can be made.

f) Public open space opposite 32 and 34 Bartholomew Close

A site meeting took place immediately prior to the start of the Parish Council meeting.

The concerns of the residents of the Close about the proposed works on the open space were discussed. Taking these concerns into consideration it was however decided that the Parish Council would install one bench beneath one of the smaller trees in front of the access path to the open space. Brian Hicks offered the use of a bench he owns to the Parish Council and this was accepted with thanks. It was agreed that Dick Rudd would be asked to collect, rub down and restrain the bench before installing it on the open space.

Brian Hicks agreed to liaise with Mr Rudd. It was further decided that West Oxfordshire District Council would be asked to install a litter bin in the vicinity of the bench – Clerk to arrange once the bench has been installed.

The clearance work of the central copse area was discussed. This does not seem to have been cleared back as far as was agreed – Edmund Strainge agreed to discuss this with the contractor. It was agreed that the large willow trunk which had not been included in the initial clearance contract should be removed – Mr Strainge to speak to the contractor about this. It was decided that once this trunk has been removed a contractor would be engaged to grind out the stumps which will get in the way of the grass mowing.

It was further decided that the Parish Council would consider asking its litter picker to include this area in his work once the bin has been installed.

Edmund Strainge told the Parish Council that he has asked Dick Rudd to provide a quotation for the installation of a metal barrier at the entrance to the open space, similar to the one at the sportsfield – Clerk to chase.

118.10 Matters Arising from Previous Meetings (continued)

Public open space opposite 32 and 34 Bartholomew Close (continued)

The need to improve the visibility of the open space in order to reduce the possibility of incidences of anti-social behaviour was discussed. It was agreed that Godfrey's (the Parish Council's hedge cutter) would be asked to take the height of the hedge down to 4ft when they carry out their next planned trim. The need for some of the trees near the hedge to be coppiced to improve visibility was discussed – it was agreed that it would be sensible to do this over a period of time, with, for example, one third of the trees to be coppiced in each year. Brian Hicks agreed to ask Dick Rudd to provide a quotation for this work.

It was decided that consideration of regulations and signage for the open space would be carried over to a future meeting.

The Clerk was asked to advise the local Neighbourhood Police Team of the Parish Council's plans for the open space and to ask them for any advice they may be able to offer.

The discussion then turned to the issue of the gap which has historically been cut through the hedge and fence bordering the open space land on the right hand side of the close. It was decided that Dick Rudd would be asked to close this gap by inserting a section of fence to match the existing in order to reinstate the boundary to its original condition, secure the open space and to protect the privacy of the residents adjacent to the open space. The Clerk was asked to write to the residents opposite the open space at this location and to request that they remove the arch which has been installed in the gap in advance of the work.

g) Risk Assessments

Richard Border and Catherine Maddison agreed to prepare initial draft risk assessments for the village green and pond, the allotments and the open spaces at Bartholomew Close and Peel Close/Lovell Close. Peter Amgill will also be asked to assist with this.

h) West Oxfordshire District Council's consultation on its draft Public Open Space Strategy

It was decided that the Parish Council would not respond to this consultation.

119.10 New Business

a) Grant request from West Oxfordshire Citizen's Advice Bureau

It was decided to give a grant of £100 to the West Oxfordshire CAB.

b) Request for the installation of a waxed drinks recycling bin in the car park at Aston Road

It was decided not to agree to this request.

c) Grant request from Oxfordshire Association for the Blind

It was resolved that the Council, in accordance with its powers under sections 137 and 139 of the Local Government Act 1972, would pay a grant of £20.00 to Oxfordshire Association for the Blind. This is, in the opinion of the Council, in the interests of the inhabitants of the Parish and will benefit them in a manner commensurate with the expenditure.

d) Annual inspection of horse chestnut tree at Bartholomew Close open space

It was decided that Boward Tree Surgery would be asked to carry out the annual inspection.

119.10 New Business (continued)

e) *Central Government consultation on the introduction of compulsory Council Tax increase referendums*

It was decided that the following response would be made: without the concept of what will be considered an “excessive” increase being defined it is hard to say how the proposals will impact on smaller local councils; smaller local councils have by their nature very variable levels of expenditure which could lead to necessary annual adjustments to the precept being determined to be “excessive”; in smaller local councils a small monetary increase can lead to a large percentage increase, potentially making any changes to the precept appear “excessive.”; the cost of a referendum could easily outweigh any proposed precept increase; there should be consideration of the inclusion of a means of tiering local councils so that smaller councils are taken out of any proposed legislation.

f) *Oxfordshire Rural Community Council's 90th birthday AGM and Conference*

No representative from the Parish Council was available to attend this meeting in October.

120.10 School Report

Richard Border told the Parish Council that the school has not long re-opened after the summer holiday and that the next Governors' meeting is on 20 September.

121.10 Playgrounds/Sportsfield

a) *Inspection Report for August*

A copy of the inspection report prepared by Dick Rudd had been circulated in the Clerk's Briefing Notes.

No new matters noted.

b) *September's inspection*

Peter Godwin volunteered to carry out this inspection.

c) *Current works*

- Zipwire bark – area has been weeded and 3m³ of new bark put down
- Fence “stub” between path and tennis court – Dick Rudd advises that this is deliberately placed there to prevent unauthorised vehicles from driving onto the playground area. It was decided that Dick Rudd will be asked to paint this white to reduce the possibility of anyone tripping over it.
- Proposals to close the gap in the hedge between the ditch and the pavilion
A quotation to close this gap with post and rail fencing for £224 was discussed. It was decided that culverting the ditch may be a better solution. Clerk to contact the Environment Agency to ask them what process/procedure should be followed.
- Work on safer surfacing
A quotation of £350 from Dick Rudd to lift the tiles on all areas other than the climbing frames, clean underneath them and restick them, using spare tiles from the empty area at Chalcroft where necessary and possible was considered and accepted. Dick Rudd to be asked to replace edging battens as necessary when carrying out the work.

121.10 Playgrounds/Sportsfield (continued)

Current works (continued)

- Anti-bird roosting spikes for swing seat frames
The Clerk told the Parish Council that 18metres of spikes would need to be purchased – this can be obtained from Jones & Son for £70.20 + £7.95 delivery. It was decided that this should be ordered and that the spikes would be installed with white/clear cable ties. Adrian Armitage volunteered to install the spikes with the assistance of other Parish Councillors.

- d) *Playground & other painting – Probation Service project*
Remaining work: priming of climbing frame at Chalcroft and two coats of top-coat to all pieces of equipment at Chalcroft.
The Clerk expressed her concerns about whether this project can be completed before the winter. It was decided that if the Probation Service is unable to complete the work (because of poor weather, for example), Councillors would consider completing it themselves.

- e) *Electricity supply at pavilion*
Southern Electricity Contracting attended on site on 11 August. They were accompanied by Steve Townsend. A faulty circuit was identified and switched off – the circuit was not traced but does not seem to supply anything currently used. A damaged socket cover was replaced.

- f) *Break-in at pavilion*
A break-in took place on 12 April 2010 – the Parish Council was not formally told about a potential financial impact to the Council until 1 July. An invoice has now been received for repairs to the doors and locks – a copy of the invoice was circulated in the Clerk's Briefing Notes. The Clerk confirmed that she had submitted a claim to Allianz, the Council's insurers at the time. They have confirmed that they will approve the claim, less the £125 excess. It was agreed that the builder's invoice should be paid.

- g) *Joint Parish Council/Sports Club Committee*
Peter Godwin, Catherine Maddison and Brian Hicks agreed to represent the Parish Council on the proposed committee. It was agreed that the committee will not have decision making powers but will have the purpose of discussing ideas for the future working relationship and lease between the Parish Council and Sports Club. Clerk to write to the Sports Club.

- h) *Renewal of lease for sportsfield extension*
The current lease, which was for a 15 year term, expired on 23 November 2009. The Trustees of R J Fielden Will Trust are proposing to grant a new lease for a five year term at a revised rent of £102.50 per quarter (increased by £8.75 per quarter – 9.3%). It was agreed to accept the proposed rent increase but to ask for a longer term of 15 years, with rent review points every 5 years.

- i) *Non-functioning roadway lights – car park to pavilion*
The Sports Club advises that these are not working again. They have already been repaired (replacement of bulbs/timers) twice in the past 3 years. The Clerk has contacted Howse and O'Reilly to request they attend to repair – Brian Hicks agreed to chase the work up.

122.10 PLANNING

PLANNING APPLICATIONS GRANTED:

10/0779/P/FP 16 Bartholomew Close, Ducklington
Erection of single and two storey extensions, conversion of loft to include front dormer window

The Parish Council objected to this application

10/0883/P/FP 4 Lovell Close
Erection of first floor side extension

10/0876/P/FP 3 Dale Walk
Conversion of existing garage to form playroom and erection of two storey extension to provide new garage with dressing room and en-suite above.
Construction of boundary wall and railings

NEW PLANNING APPLICATIONS:

10/1190/P/FP 50 Beanhill Road
Alterations and erection of single storey extensions
No objections

10/1214/P/FP 1 Back Lane
Erection of single storey, two storey and first floor extensions
It was decided that the Parish Council would object to the proposed use of glass for the rear extension, as this is not in keeping with the Conservation Area.

123.10 FINANCE

a) Account Balances and Debts due to Council – as circulated with the meeting papers

Balance on Current Account at 31 August 2010	£ 3,307.70
Balance on Deposit with WODC at 31 August 2010	£27,300.00
Total Cash Holding	<u>£30,607.70</u>

b) External audit for 2009/10
The Clerk informed the Parish Council that following the note put on the external return by the internal auditor (discussed at the meeting on 7 July), the external auditor has requested a copy of the internal auditor's report. This has been sent, together with the Parish Council's response thereto.
Further contact from the external auditor is awaited.

c) Designated reserves
It was decided to start a new designated reserve for future playground refurbishment with the money received from Primesite Media (£4,000).

123.10 FINANCE (continued)

d) AUGUST INVOICES

PRESENTED FOR APPROVAL AND PAYMENT AT 8 SEPTEMBER 2010 MEETING

		Statute
Clerk's salary & working from home allowance	336.08	LGA 1972, s112 & LGA 1972 s111
HM Revenue & Customs (PAYE on Clerk's salary)	24.20	LGA 1972, s112
Margaret Johnson – stationery & copying	75.58	LGA 1972, s111
AK Timms – materials for playground and pavilion project	225.20	LG(MP)A 1976, s19
West Oxfordshire District Council – four cut of verges in June and July (8 cuts invoiced this year to date)	1,153.43	HA 1980, s116
Countrywide – 5 cuts of playing field in July (16 cuts invoiced this year to date)	440.63	LG(MP)A 1976, s19
Townsend Brothers (Builders) Ltd – repairs following break-in on 12 April 2010	767.57	LG(MP)A 1976, s19
Thames Water - water for allotments& pavilion q/e August 2010 (estimated readings)	328.98	SH & AA 1908 & LG(MP)A 1976, s19
B Lockett – litter picking for August	60.00	LG(MP)A 1976, s19
J Miles – one cut of grass at walled cemetery (6 cuts this year to date)	75.00	LGA 1972 s214
Dick Rudd – Playground inspection, repair of notice board, laying bark under zipwire, clearance work at Bartholomew Close	330.00	LG(MP)A 1976, s19
Banbury Turf – 3m3 of bark for zipwire	229.13	LG(MP)A 1976, s19
Mrs F Bryant – rental of extension to sportsfield, Oct to Dec (due by Sept quarter day)	93.75	LG(MP)A 1976, s19
West Oxfordshire Citizen's Advice Bureau - grant	100.00	LGA 1972 s142
Oxfordshire Association for the Blind - grant	20.00	LGA 1972 s137
TOTAL	£4,259.55	

The payments were approved. The cheques were signed by Edmund Strange and Brian Hicks.

124.10 Parish Councillors' reports from meetings attended since last meeting

Brian Hicks reported on his attendance at the Gill Mill Liaison meeting with Smiths on 3 September. The notes of the meeting which had been prepared and forwarded by Martin Layer of Smiths were placed in the folder for circulation. Oxfordshire County Council has provided Smiths with a response to their request for a Scoping Opinion for the proposed extension at Gill Mill – a copy of the response was placed in the folder for circulation. Work has now started on preparing all of the information required within the Scoping Opinion. The planning application for the extension has now been delayed to summer 2011, with a proposed public exhibition and consultation in spring 2011.

125.10 Other matters for discussion – for information only

- a) Brian Hicks told the Parish Council that he thinks that the tenant of allotment 14A who has previously notified the Parish Council that he wishes to vacate his allotment on 31 December has stopped cultivating it and would be happy to vacate it now. Clerk to check with tenant and if this is the case to offer the allotment to the next person on the waiting list (Mr S Hussain).
- b) The footpath which runs past the fritillary field to Ducklington lake is overgrown.

125.10 Other matters for discussion – for information only (continued)

- c) The Clerk told the Parish Council that she has received an invitation for a representative of the Parish Council to attend an Emergency Planning event organised by Oxfordshire County Council on 14 October at the WODC offices. None of the Parish Councillors at the meeting were available to attend. The Clerk was asked to inform Peter Almgill, Glyn Rees and Graham Lenton of the meeting in case they can attend.

- d) The Clerk told the Parish Council that she has been informed that Oxfordshire County Council has prepared an Emergency Planning booklet which they would like parish and town councils to circulate to their residents. It was agreed that the Clerk would ask Margaret Hellawell to check whether any of the newsletter distributors would be able to deliver the booklets at the same time as the next newsletter. If this is not possible Councillors agreed that they could make alternative arrangements to deliver the booklets. Clerk to request sufficient copies of the booklet from the County Council.

- e) The Clerk informed the Parish Council that when talking to David Duthie from the Sports Club about the Probation Service painting project he had said that the Sports Club is considering whether to ask for permission to install a metal storage shed at the far (Fritillary Mews) end of the sportsfield for the purpose of storing floodlights which could then be used for evening football training. The Clerk said that she had told David Duthie that the Parish Council would need to receive a formal request from the Sports Club in order for this to be considered.

126.10 Date of next meeting: 6 October 2010 – Lilac Room, Village Hall, 7.30pm

Monthly meeting of Parish Council

Richard Border gave his apologies for this meeting and for the meeting on 3 November

Signeddated.....